DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 383 SO 025 217

AUTHOR Nziramasanga, Caiphas T.
TITLE Colonial Hangovers: Social Studies Curriculum Dilemmas for Zimbabwe--Implications for Indiana Social Studies Teachers.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Indiana Council for the Social Studies (Indianapolis, IN, April 10-11, 1995).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *African History; *African Studies; Area Studies; Black Studies; *Colonialism; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Foreign Culture; International Relations; Land Acquisition; Land Settlement; Non Western Civilization; Political Attitudes; *Political Divisions (Geographic); *Social Studies; *World History
IDENTIFIERS Indiana; *Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

This paper briefly examines the historical background to political independence in African nations, highlighting the control of the colonial masters on those nations. The "hangovers" describes how early colonial control has had serious influence on the development of social studies curriculum in Zimbabwe. The paper concludes by narrating the implications of these colonial hangovers for social studies teachers, including: (1) rapid changes in names and boundaries; (2) changes in governments and economic systems with new elections; and (3) an understanding of the different colonial powers that controlled countries in Africa and that these European nations had used and emphasized different strategies and techniques which are now responsible for many of Africa's political, economic and social problems. (EH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 387 383

COLONIAL HANGOVERS:
SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM DILEMMAS FOR ZIMBABWE--
IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIANA SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

Caiphas T. Nziramasanga

Paper read at the

Indiana Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference

April 10-11, 1995

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Dr C T Nziramasanga

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SP 025 217

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Introduction

"Colonial hangovers." This phrase says all about the development of Social Studies curricula in developing nations, especially those of Africa. This short paper briefly examines the historical background to political independence in African nations, in general highlighting the relentless grips of the colonial masters on those nations, and then describes how some of these grips have had serious influence on the development of Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwe. The paper finally narrates the implications of the hangovers for Indiana's Social Studies teachers.

Background

The majority of the developing countries were colonies of some European country or other. Africa uniquely was parcelled out in the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 without the owners of the concerned countries present or consulted. That Conference resulted in what historians have called "The Partition of Africa" whose results, in retrospect, were the root causes of World War I--so regrettably played down by European historians. Thus, Africa was colonized for:

- *Economic Forces.*

  The boom of the commercial and industrial revolutions in Europe ushered in an unprecedented desire for African raw materials and goods, especially precious metals. Since European governments and capitalists had lost the American boot, Africa had remained the only source.

- *International Politics.*

  Closely linked with the economic forces was the international politics drama of Europe. Britain had lost the U.S.A. and its markets and products--source of her economic vitality. France too had lost much of the little she had; Spain and Portugal were more losing their former overseas monopoly; Germany and Italy found

themselves left out of the game of wealth massing. In all truth, control of international trade was synonymous with political, economic and military dominance of Europe.

- *Military Forces.*

  At the time European nations rushed to colonize Africa, they had already established themselves in Canada, Mexico, the West Indies, South America, India, and several islands and colonies in Asia. It became a patriotic duty to protect and preserve their overseas empires militarily at all cost. It became imperative and mandatory for them to protect their sea routes and so the need to control what they considered "strategic lands" outside Europe. Thus inside Africa, it was considered paramount to control strategic rivers like the Nile, Niger, Zambezi, and the Congo.

- *Religious Forces.*

  Elsewhere in the African continent European missionaries had set up mission stations preaching to the indigenes. These Christian posts were used as claims for territorial occupation. For instance, the British in Central Africa used David Livingstone's missionary escapades to claim the present Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Other European nations expeditiously exported missionary personnel to stake claims which were immediately followed by military adventurers in the persons of hunters, explorers and "civilizing agents."

- *Settlements.*

  With the population explosion in Europe due to industrial and agricultural revolutions, Europe got compelled to seek for "new lands" to settle their social, economic and criminal deviants and the jobless, semi-educated workers. How could such scum elements of the European society care for the social values, welfare and modernization of the indigenes of the lands they seized?

It was within these circumstances that Africa was parcelled out by European nations. Our case study, Zimbabwe was colonized for the same reasons in the same circumstances, first by the Germans for a few months; second and rather permanently, for one hundred years, by the British, through the British South Africa Company--a paramilitary police of hunters, missionaries, and mineral prospectors.

Colonialists' Agenda

In addition to their economic and military objectives, colonialists set out to:

- Suppress the indigenes by totally depriving them of any political rights.
- Destroy the culture, image and civilisation of the lands they occupied.
- Not provide productive education to the natives although allowing missionaries to teach the 3R's to limited levels and to only few Africans.
- Teach the social, cultural and histories of the colonizing nation.
- Inculcate the servitude mentality in the children and adults. For instance, we had to salute every white person--child, woman or man but not our elders.
- Insure that the indigenes know and feel that they are lucky to be under the British and so must be thankful and appreciate "everything British." We sang "God Save the Queen"; memorized the family trees of English kings; memorized poetry about the English flowers, e.g. the "daffodils in an English country garden."
- Provide the ~~celebration~~ prohibition of our festivals, kings, heroes, etc. and not to associate with any white person who was not British.
- Despise our languages, culture, heritage, and history. We had to speak the "King's Language" and not Africanized English. English oral drills were the strategies of the day--ranging from moulding lips like an English and developing more nasal sounds even if we were speaking our own native languages. In short, we were under the British monarch but not British citizens.

Teachers were grilled in English, British history, empire geography, arithmetic and *not* science. When the African teacher taught his own people, he used the same methods, strategies and techniques, i.e. drills, memorization, and English pronunciation and writing.

Liberation Struggle

One hundred years of colonial servitude without both political influence and meaningful citizenship had been enough. African political movements intensified the fight for independence to:

- remove the evil political system;
- resuscitate African culture and images;
- gain genuine citizenship and balanced heritage.

Political independence was won after a twenty-five year protracted struggle. That was followed by a new educational, political and social order.

New Social Order

The colonial system was replaced by the democratic government and a non-racial society. Education became a human right and so its curriculum changed rapidly from elementary to university level.

Significant innovations incorporated redrawing the history and other social sciences subjects. Textbooks were rewritten; syllabuses replanned and new teachers' guides written up. Content of history, political economy, African languages, geography and sociology began to emphasize African heritage, history and contribution to human history. Historical accounts which portrayed European perspectives were corrected and accurate accounts presented. Names of places, towns, leaders and events were changed to genuine national ones which had either been thrown away or

Anglicized. Thus, Social Studies is struggling to rebuild and create the original and/or new images.

However, Anglo-Saxon images are still cherished and in many cases revered over African ones. For instance, there are people who still prefer to learn and speak English only in their homes. Many, especially the young, still speak English in the English accents, i.e. the "Nose Brigades" as they are ridiculed. Many African people do not want their children to study their mother tongue in school but English only.

In tertiary education, superiors in both colleges, universities and government consider those who did not do a degree in Britain or Canada or Australia to be not as highly educated as those who learnt in Britain. One with a higher degree from Britain and not the U.S.A. is offered a job first. The story is long.

Implications for Indiana Teachers

The changes in developing nations are fast and enormous. Names of cities, for example, are changed for new ones. In other small instances boundaries are altered, e.g. Namibia and South Africa--needs constant watch.

Government and economic systems are changing as fast as government elections are taking place. Teachers should be well informed so that they do not teach colonial scenarios as if they are for today, or that they talk of colonialists having "discovered" when the indigenes were there before the colonialists and knew such phenomenon. Such erroneous teaching offends the citizens of developing nations, not to mention teaching Indiana's students wrong information.

Thirdly, teachers need to know the different colonial powers that controlled countries in Africa and that these European nations had used and emphasized different strategies and techniques which are now responsible for many of Africa's political, economic and social problems. For instance, border conflicts are regular because the

boundaries drawn up by the Berlin Conference and or later modifications are artificial and cut across many legitimate ethnic groups. Some language groups are split into two, three or more groups. Central Africa is a case in point.

Certainly, to keep pace with such changes is difficult for teachers. However, it is possible with the conscientious teacher.

Selected References

Bhebe, N., (1979), *Christianity and Traditional Religion in Western Zimbabwe, 1859-1923*. London: Longman.

Bhebe, N. (Ed.), (1979), *Junior Certificate History of Southern Africa, Book I*. London: Heinemann.

Bhila, H., (1989), *Trade and Politics in a Shona Kingdom*. London: Longman.

Chirenje, J. M., (1982), *A History of Zimbabwe for Primary Schools*. Harare: Longman.

Machingaidze, V., (1988), *A Junior Certificate History for Zimbabwe II*. Harare: Longman.